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ABSTRACT

This study investigated whether preservice teachers' self-ratings of their skills and knowledge were comparable to the ratings of the same set of skills by their closets faculty members, in this case, their assigned mentor leaders. The participants were eight cohorts of students receiving their initial teacher certification and about to graduate. The eight mentor leaders had served as advisors for these students for their junior and senior years in most cases, although the two graduate-level cohorts had only been together for one school year in secondary education. Both groups completed identical Likert-type questionnaires, and the Spearman Rho was used to correlate the sets of answers. Results were as expected for the most part; students rated themselves higher than the mentor leader did. The best correlation was found in the estimation of technology skills, ability to choose teaching materials, and the ability to design teaching units. Correlations for leadership and ability to plan lessons were also statistically significant, although lower than expected. A secondary analysis comparing the percentage of just ratings of excellent was done for the set of questions. Three of the mentor leaders had moderate to high correlations with their students' self-ratings for the set of abilities. Since 93% of the students regarded their overall ability to begin teaching as good or excellent, and 93% of their mentor leaders felt the same, students' responses can be regarded as valid, and it can be expected that they will have a successful first year of teaching. With regard to specific abilities, the mentor leaders could stress more self-evaluation or collect more data about the lowest correlated skills and abilities. An appendix contains the forms used in the study. (Author/SLD)

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ED 481 050

Student Self-Evaluation of

Teaching Abilities at Graduation from GC&SU

Teacher Education in the Initial Preparation Program

Validity Study April 2002

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Dr. Kevin Crabb, MAT Secondary Education
Dr. Rosemary Jackson, Special Education Interrelated Disabilities
Dr. Karynne Kleine, Middle Grades Education
Dr. Brian Mumma, Early Childhood Education at Macon Campus
Dr. Patricia Tolbert, Music Education
Ms. Lyndall Warren, Early Childhood Education

Data Analysis and Report by:
Dr. Sharene Smoot, Foundations & Secondary Education

TM035288

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine if our preservice teachers' self-ratings of their skills and knowledge were comparable to the ratings of this same set of skills by their closest faculty member, in this case their assigned mentor leader. The participants were eight cohorts of students receiving their initial teacher certification and graduating at this time. The eight mentor leaders served as advisors for their group of student for both their junior and senior years in most cases. In the case of the two graduate level cohorts, the program was only for one year in secondary education. The mentor leaders also served as instructors for various (but not all) of the courses taken by their assigned students. Four of the mentor leaders were new to the school of education and this was their first cohort. The questionnaire had 13 questions related to the stated goals of the school of education in their conceptual framework as well as an overall readiness to begin teaching question. Both groups completed identical versions by circling the Likert scale elements. The forms were matched by student identifying numbers but were otherwise confidential. The data analysis used the Spearman Rho to correlate the sets of answers. The results were as expected in that for the most part; the students rated themselves higher than their mentor leader did. The best correlation was found in the estimation of technology skills (Rho = .34), ability to choose teaching materials (Rho = .31), and the ability to design teaching units (Rho = 30). Correlations for leadership (Rho = .27) and ability to plan lessons (Rho = .27) were also statistically significant. However, these correlations were lower than expected. This is partly due to the restriction in the range of the answers since most of the ratings were either good or excellent. Therefore a secondary analysis comparing the percent of just the ratings of excellent was done for the set of questions. Three of the mentor leaders had moderate to high correlations with their students' self-ratings in the set of abilities. Two were experienced and had several sets of cohorts to graduate. The third was one of the new mentor leaders. Since 98% of the students regarded their overall ability to begin teaching as good or excellent and 93% of their mentor leaders felt the same, the students' responses can be regarded as valid, and we expect them to have a successful first year of teaching. In regards to specific abilities, the mentor leaders could stress more self-evaluation or collect more data in regards to the lowest correlated skills or abilities.

Student Self-Evaluation of

Teaching Abilities at Graduation from GC&SU

Teacher Education in the Initial Preparation Program

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the self-ratings that the exiting seniors gave themselves on the 13 teaching skills/abilities emphasized in our conceptual framework would be comparable to the ratings given by them to their mentor leaders. It was expected that the seniors would probably rate themselves somewhat higher than their professors would, but that there would be a positive correlation of these ratings.

Methods

Participants

There were a total of 108 students and 8 professors participating in the study. There were 6 cohorts from the main campus at Milledgeville and 2 cohorts from the satellite campus at Macon State College. The Milledgeville cohorts were Early Childhood (n = 27), Health and Physical Education (n = 7), Middle Grades (n = 16), Music (n = 4), Special Education (n = 19), and Secondary Education (n = 15). The Macon cohorts were Early Childhood (n = 10) and Secondary Education (n = 8). The mentor leaders were all professors who served as advisors and course instructors in the major field. The cohorts were students who started their professional education coursework at the start of their junior year and took all their classes together for the two year period culminating in their student teaching during the spring of their senior year.

Instrumentation

One page questionnaires were used. See Appendix. The professors were instructed to rate each student in their group (cohort) at the end of his/her student teaching. "How would you rate his/her present abilities as a beginning teacher?" The students were asked "How would you rate your skills as a beginning teacher right now?" The 13 teaching skills were described and the rating scale was excellent, good, fair, or poor. There was an additional question (which was actually question one) in which the person was asked to rate their ability to "begin teaching overall". The last five digits of the students' social security numbers were used to match the questionnaires for data analysis.

Procedures

The students were given the one page questionnaire during a session in which they all met with the SOE certification officer to complete their paperwork for applying for teacher certification during their last month at GC&SU. The mentor leaders were given a comparable version of the form at about the same time and asked to rate each of their graduating seniors using the same rating scale. The instructions on the forms stated that the participants were to base their ratings or self-ratings on their skills/abilities as a beginning teacher.

Data Analysis

This was a descriptive study and Spearman Rho correlations were used. Data were analyzed as a whole and then cohort by cohort.

Results

Most of the students (97%) rated themselves as Excellent or Good on their overall readiness to begin teaching and on most of the different teaching skills. The exception was the MAT cohort on the main campus who rated themselves somewhat lower. The mentor leaders also used mostly Excellent or Good (93%) to rate their students as beginning teachers. The proportion of Excellent ratings was much higher for the students than for the mentor leaders which we expected to find. There were some positive

and statistically significant correlations of the student and mentor leader ratings on about half of the skills rated. Highest correlated were the ratings for the use of technology, evaluating teaching materials and planning lessons. The actual Spearman Rho correlation coefficients were quite low (.33-.30). This is probably due to the restriction in range of the ratings (dependent variables) since most of the ratings were either a 3 (good) or a 4 (excellent).

Then the percent of ratings of excellent were calculated for both the students and the mentor leaders for all of the 14 skills listed, actually 13 skills and one overall teaching readiness rating. When these numbers were correlated as a set, the value of the correlation was much higher ($r = .52$, $n = 14$, $p = .03$, one-tailed). Three of the mentor leaders got moderate or higher statistically significant correlations of the ranking of their students' perceived skills at exit from teacher preparation. The HPE and Music cohorts were so small in number (less than ten) that their numbers are suspect for true validity. Scatter plots are included in this report, both for the dataset as a whole and individually by cohorts that illustrate the aspects of teaching where the agreements and disagreements are by quadrants. As expected the mentor leaders' ratings are lower than the students' self-ratings in most aspects, including their overall readiness to begin teacher.

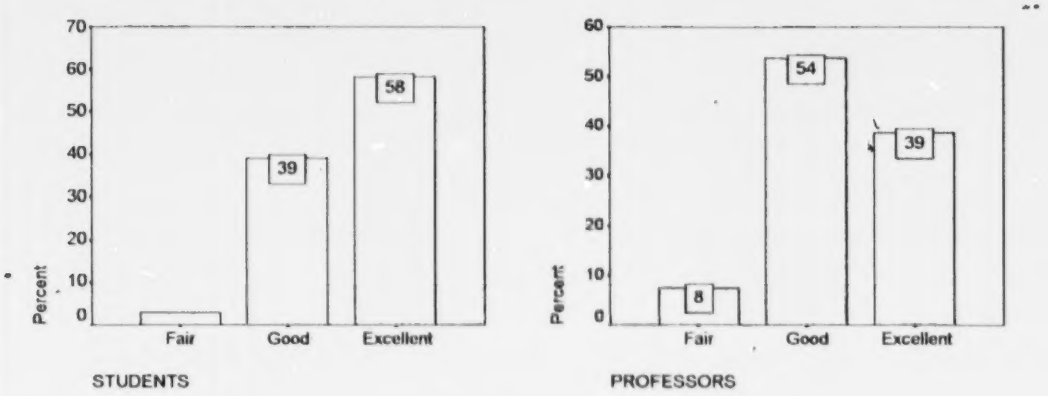
Then the difference between the mentor leaders' and students' ratings of excellent in percents was calculated. Most of the mentor leaders differed from their cohorts on the various skills only about plus or minus 20% in their ratings of excellent. A set of bar charts accompanies each scatterplot and shows the discrepancies from overratings by the mentor leaders to underratings by the mentor leaders (from the student's point of view!).

Discussion and Conclusions

This study validated (for the most part) the self-ratings of the teacher education candidates and the mentor leaders. The JHL-SOE produces mostly excellent or good beginning teachers. This was also the finding in the employer survey conducted three years ago. Of the eight cohort leaders who participated in this study, only 4 were experienced. The other four were new and this was their first cohort to complete the GC&SU teacher education program. Our program has a unique conceptual framework for teacher education with a large field-based component and many other additional requirements designed to enhance the ability of these students to work cooperatively with others and develop their liberal arts skills; especially skills in communication, problem solving, leadership, and self-evaluation.

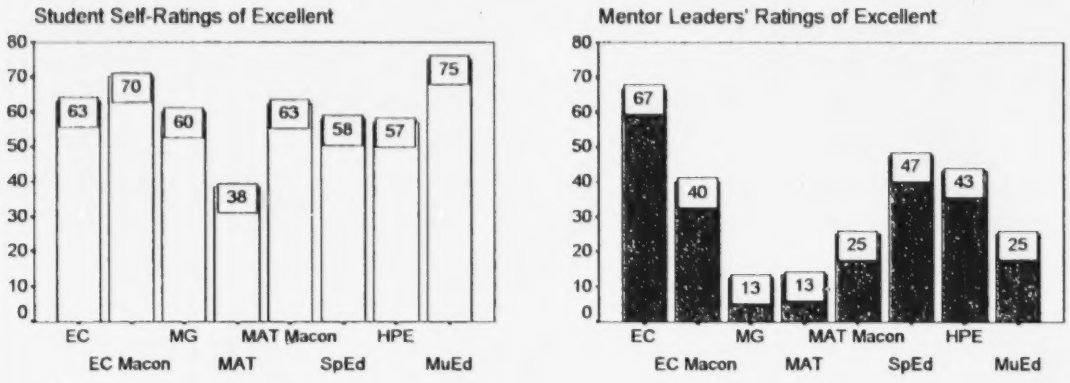
Results and Figures

Figure 1 - Comparison of Ratings of Overall Ability to Begin Teaching



These differences were statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Figure 2 - Percent of Ratings of Excellent by Major



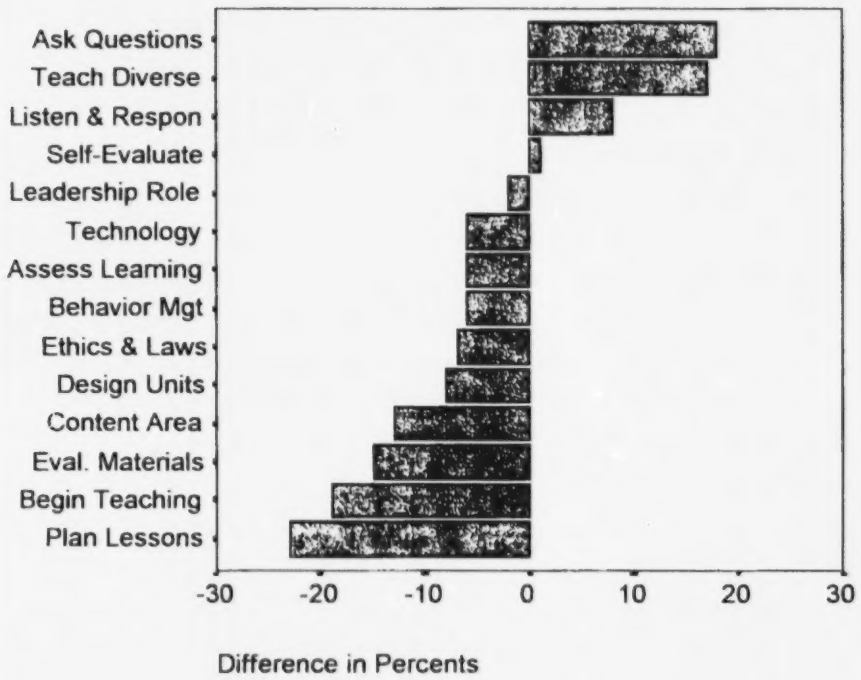
The correlation between the students' and mentor leaders' of ratings are statistically significant and positive, but quite low (Rho = .20, n = 103, p = .02). The low value of the correlation may be due to the restriction in range of the values, since most of the ratings were either 3 (good) or 4 (excellent) by both the student and the professor.

The correlation of the students' self-ratings and the ratings by their mentor leader is highest for using technology in teaching. The table below also shows the percent of the ratings of Excellent on a question by question basis for both the students and the mentor leaders. Only the five highest correlations are statistically significant.

Table 1 – Item by Item Correlations and Percent of Students Rated "Excellent"

#	Question	Correlation	Students	Mentors
3	Technology	.34	35	29
13	Evaluate Materials	.31	64	49
6	Design Units	.30	48	40
14	Leadership Role	.27	44	42
5	Plan Lessons	.27	62	39
4	Manage Behavior	.22	31	25
1	Begin Teaching	.20	58	39
7	Assess Learning	.21	33	27
11	Self-Evaluate	.19	49	50
9	Ask Questions	.15	34	52
8	Teach Diverse Students	.13	40	57
2	Content Area	.13	38	25
12	Ethics & Laws	.12	67	60
10	Listen & Respond	.10	50	58

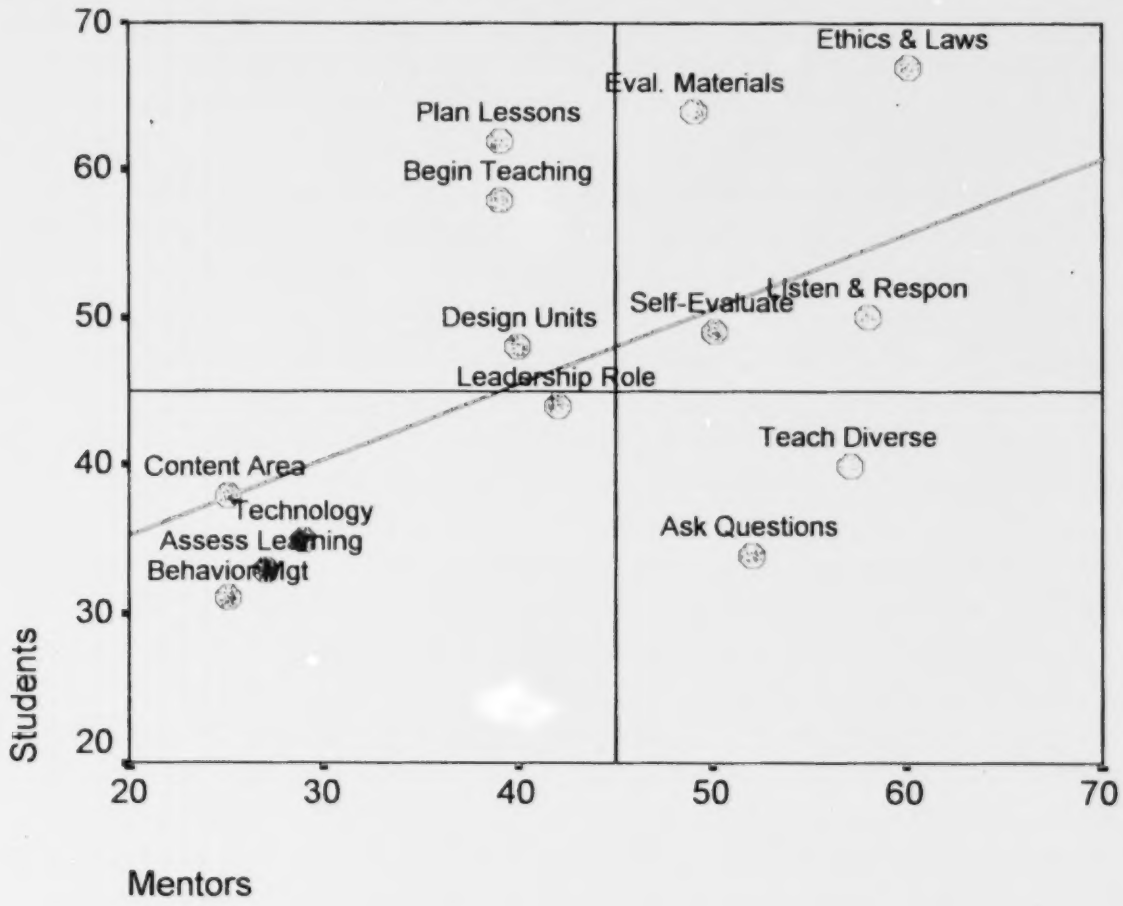
Figure 3 - Differences in the Ratings of Excellent are Plus or Minus 20%



The mentor leaders rated the students higher in ability to Ask Questions and lower in Planning Lessons.

However when the percent of ratings of excellent for the students and the mentor leaders are correlated, the correlation between these ratings is higher than for any individual variable ($r = .52$, $n = 14$, $p = .03$ one-tailed). See Scatterplot below.

Figure 4 – Scatterplot of Item by Item Correlations



The most discrepancies are in the upper left and lower right quadrants. The upper left quadrant has aspects where the students' self-ratings were much higher and the lower right quadrant shows where the students" self-ratings were much lower than the mentor leaders' ratings.

Appendix

The first form is the mentor leader version. This is followed by the instructions.

The second form is two pages which were separated. Only the first page was used for this study.

John H. Lounsbury School of Education

Teacher Preparation Program Evaluation Validity Study
Spring 2002

Please rate each student in your cohort at the end of her/his student teaching.

Student SSN _____

How would you rate his/her present abilities as a beginning teacher? *(Please circle your answer)*

1. begin teaching overall _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. develop his/her content area knowledge (reading, math, science, etc.) Excellent Good Fair Poor

3. use technology in his/her new teaching job. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

4. manage classroom behavior of students. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

5. plan day to day lessons. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

6. design teaching units. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

7. assess the learning of their students (teaching effectiveness). _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

8. understand diverse learners and find the strengths in each student. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

9. tactfully ask the right questions to get information from students, parents coworkers and supervisors. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

10. listen and respond professionally to parents, students, and coworkers. Excellent Good Fair Poor

11. self-evaluate his/her work and decide how to improve next time. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

12. understand and comply with professional ethics and educational laws. Excellent Good Fair Poor

13. evaluate and find good teaching materials and resources. _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

14. play a leadership role in his/her school or community _____ Excellent Good Fair Poor

Thank you for helping in this study. Please give all of these evaluations in a batch to Sharie Smoot with your name, total number of students, with major and campus.

March 18, 2002

From: Sharie Smoot & Program/Assessment Committee

To: Mentor Leaders of Exiting Seniors and M.A.T. Initial Preparation Programs

Re: Validity Study of the Exit Survey

This year only, we are going to compare the student's self-ratings on the various aspects of our conceptual framework with the mentor Leader's evaluation of that same student. Some time in April, please complete one of these rating forms for each student. Just put the student's social security number on the top and circle your rating for each student. Keep in mind that we have asked them to rate their skills as a beginning teacher on a form identical to this one.

We expect to find a positive correlation between your ratings and their self-ratings of their skills as a beginning teacher. Please be honest and just circle Excellent, Good, Fair (OK) or Poor for each question in regard to that particular student.

Don Jackson will be giving this same survey along with a satisfaction survey (that part will be anonymous) when he gets the students together for doing their certification paperwork.

When you are finished, please bring your forms/surveys all together as a batch and give them to me with your name, total number of students, with major and campus.

John H. Lounsbury School of Education

Teacher Preparation Program Self-Study Spring 2002

How would you rate your skills as a beginning teacher right now?

(Please circle your answer)

1. ready to begin teaching overall Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. your content area knowledge (reading, math, science, etc.) Excellent Good Fair Poor

3. using technology in your teaching job. Excellent Good Fair Poor

4. managing classroom behavior of students. Excellent Good Fair Poor

5. planning day to day lessons. Excellent Good Fair Poor

6. designing teaching units. Excellent Good Fair Poor

7. assessing the learning of your students (your teaching effectiveness). Excellent Good Fair Poor

8. understand diverse learners and finding the strengths in each student. Excellent Good Fair Poor

9. tactfully asking the right questions to get information from students, parents coworkers and supervisors. Excellent Good Fair Poor

10. listening and responding professionally to parents, students, and coworkers. Excellent Good Fair Poor

11. self-evaluating your work and deciding how to improve next time. Excellent Good Fair Poor

12. understanding and complying with professional ethics and educational laws. Excellent Good Fair Poor

13. evaluating and finding good teaching materials and resources. Excellent Good Fair Poor

14. playing a leadership role in your school or community. Excellent Good Fair Poor

Your answers will be kept confidential, but we want to be able to analyze your answers in various ways to help improve our program. By giving us the last five digits of you social security number, it saves us from asking you a lot more questions.

The last five digits of my SSN are XXX – X__ -- __ __ __ __

*(Please go on to the next page, **when you are done**, tear these two pages apart and turn them in separately so that the next part can be anonymous)*

This part is about the field-based, cohort process that you participated in. Please rate:

15. The support you received from your cohort (mentor) leader. Excellent Good Fair Poor

16. The professional & theoretical knowledge of your instructors here. Excellent Good Fair Poor

17. The preparation you received for the Praxis II (licensing) exams. Excellent Good Fair Poor

18. The way your instructors helped you make connections between your classwork and your fieldwork. Excellent Good Fair Poor

19. Most of your field experiences in the local public school classrooms. Excellent Good Fair Poor

20. The teaching ability of most of your field placement (host) teachers. Excellent Good Fair Poor

21. Overall, you host teachers' ability to help you improve your teaching. Excellent Good Fair Poor

22. The core courses you took at GC&SU (leave blank if you transferred here). Excellent Good Fair Poor

23. My cohort was Middle Grades Early ChildhoodSpecial Education M.A.T.
Music Health/Physical Education

24. The campus I attended was Macon Milledgeville

There were some really good aspects of my teacher preparation program at GC&SU. They were:

1. _____
_____
_____

2. _____
_____
_____

3. _____
_____

There were some aspects of the teacher preparation program at GC&SU that could be better. They are:

1. _____
_____
_____
_____

2. _____
_____
_____
_____

3. _____
_____
_____

Thank you very much. We appreciate the continued involvement of our graduates. Without hearing from you and our alumni, GC&SU would not be the quality teacher preparation program that we feel it is today. Best wishes in all aspects of your life!

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